

## Christmas Gifts

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Summary: Fluffy Link and Tracy Christmas fic. May rot your teeth.

Link tries to get Tracy the right Christmas gift.

## Christmas Gifts

Christmas was in the air and all of Baltimore was in the holiday spirit. The streets and storefronts were covered with lights, wreaths hung from every door; and every retailer in the city was trying to out do all the others with their Christmas promotions.

So, maybe that wasn't exactly the holiday spirit but Link Larkin was caught up in it all the same.

He had been searching for weeks, trying to find the perfect gift for Tracy. He couldn't remember ever caring about something so much as he did about finding the one thing that would make her smile and her eyes light up with joy. She was the kind of girl who was made for Christmas. Before Thanksgiving had even finished, she had already been alight with a sparkle that just shouted that Christmas was on its way. Leave it to Tracy to be full of holiday joy despite the fact that Thanksgiving hadn't gone well.

Thinking about that dinner with his dad and Tracy's family made him groan, and he pushed thoughts of it aside and tried to focus on the task at hand: finding Tracy's gift. He perused the windows of the local jewelry store and sighed. There were plenty of pretty things to be had but none of them were quite what he wanted.

His turmoil had been notched up a few degrees the night before at the annual Corny Collins Christmas party. Every year, following their Christmas special, Corny threw them a party. This years party had been the best they'd ever had because of the relaxed fun atmosphere occurring in the absence of Velma Von Tussle and the addition of Maybelle Stubbs, not to mention Seaweed and Penny and most of all, Tracy. She made everything better.

He smiled at the thought of her and then frowned again as he remembered the moment that had been plaguing him ever since last night. Amber, who for the most part had let Link and Tracy be since the return from summer break, had walked onto the set with a smile that said she had a little something up her sleeve, then she had gracefully removed her coat revealing a large, jeweled brooch. She had looked right at him as Becky asked about it and he had frowned, even as Tracy released his hand and moved forward to get a better look.

"Thank you," Amber had said sweetly in response to the compliments she received. "Link gave it to me for Christmas last year."

He wasn't sure who she was trying to get at, whether it was Tracy or him, but he felt the blow deep in his gut and he couldn't brush the feeling aside even as Tracy had rolled her eyes and whispered something to Inez before coming over to give him a quick, but potent kiss.

He had bought Amber an impressive gift, one she could wear, one that would impress her and everyone who saw it adorning her perfectly stylish clothing. The gift had little to do with Amber, he was ashamed to admit; but everything to do with showing off. Now, he felt pressed that his gift to Tracy should be at least as impressive and yet it also needed to be meaningful. He didn't want something that was meant to make him look good. He wanted to surprise her, thrill her, give her something she felt she could show off and god he really didn't want her to think anything he gave her came in second to what he had given Amber.

Adding to this problem was the simple fact that this year he didn't have nearly as much money as he had last year. So much had changed since last Christmas and he simply couldn't spend a fortune on something amazing.

So, when he had seen the bracelet, sparkling in the thrift store window, he felt it was perfect. It had taken nearly all his spending money for the month but he was so relieved to have found something that he didn't care. Later, as he wrapped it carefully, he wasn't quite as sure. It was pretty, and it made him think of Tracy with all its colors and the way it sparkled whenever the light shone on it. Still, as he tucked the box into his pocket, it just didn't seem worthy of her, or how he felt about her. He wondered if any gift anywhere could be.

As he drove to her house, he tapped his fingers on the steering wheel, his mind flitting from the gift to Tracy, and how this would be the first date they'd been on in awhile; and probably the last one they'd get until after the holidays. The past few weeks had been so full they hadn't seen much of each other aside from the studio where they were surrounded by people constantly. Because of that, he was anticipating this time with her more than he had in a long time. He'd gotten so used to seeing her at school everyday and just generally having her around most of the time; and since it had been three days since he last saw her, he felt like he was going crazy.

He pulled up to the curb by her house and put the car in park. Grabbing the package he stuck it in the glove box, out of sight, and went to the front door. He knocked and waited, smiling politely when Mr. Turnblad opened the door.

Tracy peered through the window when she heard the car pull to a stop. She watched Link climb out of the driver's side, check his hair in the car window — probably the second check since stopping if she knew him at all — and then walk around the car to the sidewalk. Her breath caught in her throat just watching him; God, how she loved him.

She turned to her bed and the gift she had waiting. She had worked on it for weeks, wrapped it carefully, but she still felt uncertain about it. Link's father made good money, and there weren't really a lot of things he went without. She hoped her gift would be special to him.

She heard her mother calling her and stopped to check her appearance one more time in her mirror, then swept up the carefully wrapped gift and slipped it inside her thick winter coat.

Link stood up from where he'd been seated on the couch chatting with her father and smiled when she walked into the room.

"Hi," she said sweetly as she moved to stand in front of him, wanting to lean up and kiss him because there he was all wonderful looking and very much hers, but she resisted because her father was standing nearby.

"Hey," he responded looking down at her with that look, the one that made her feel giggly and warm all the way to her toes. "Are you ready to go?" he asked, running a fingertip discreetly over her knuckles.

"Alright then, you two kids have fun and be careful," Wilbur said, clapping his hands together. "Link, I expect you to respect the curfew as always."

"Yes, Mr. Turnblad, I will," Link said courteously.

"Dad, he knows; you don't have to remind us every time," Tracy said with exasperation. "When have we ever been late?"

"I just want to make sure there never is a first time," her father said waving a hand at them as he left the room.

Tracy rolled her eyes but Link just smiled. She pulled him to the door and they slipped out, hand in hand, into the crisp night air. When they reached the car Link reached out to open the door for her, but before she climbed in Tracy grabbed the lapels of his dark wool jacket and pulled him down to her level for a kiss.

"Hello," he said softly against her lips. Tracy just grinned and kissed him one more time before ducking into her seat.

"Maybe this was a bad idea after all," Link said turning to her as he shoved his free hand into his pocket.

"Really?" Tracy said looking up at the bare trees silhouetted in the street lights. "I like it. We're alone, and the lights are pretty and we're alone... Only, I wishâ€| never mind."

"What?" he asked looking down at her upturned face, lost in dreamy

thought. "What do you wish for Trace?"

"It's silly," she said shaking her head.

"I'm sure it's not silly," Link said as he tried to hunch farther down into his jacket.

"Yes it is," Tracy said finally turning to him. "I was gonna wish for snow. I really want a white Christmas."

Link smiled, though his lower lip trembled a bit. "I don't think that's silly at all, Trace."

Tracy smiled up at him and then suddenly frowned. "You're freezing!"

"No, I'm fine," Link protested squeezing her hand.

"Your lips are blue."

"So, you were looking at my lips, hmm?" he said, attempting a suave reply which was completely ruined by chattering teeth.

"Link, you're cold!" Tracy's eyes lit up suddenly. "It's a perfect time to give you my present!"

Link looked surprised. "But I left yours in the car!"

"Oh, that's okay," Tracy said, reaching inside her coat and pulling out the long, neatly wrapped package and handing it to him. "Here, it's not much, but Merry Christmas."

Link took the package from her and found it was warm from being tucked next to her body. He carefully opened each end and pulled out a long knitted scarf, blue with dark red stripes. He fingered the soft article and looked up at her with a surprised smile. "Did you make this?"

Tracy nodded. "It's no big deal."

"No big deal? It's amazing," he said looping the scarf haphazardly around his neck. She giggled, reaching up to adjust it for him. He looked in the package and noticed there was more and pulled out a matching hat and gloves.

"I know you probably won't wear the hat," she started, looking uncertain. "But it was part of the set, so I made it just in case!" Before she had even finished he pulled the cap on over his carefully sculpted hair, bringing the folded blue edge down to his eyebrows, the color brought out the shade of his eyes even more intently. Tracy gasped a little in surprise as she watched him and then smiled.

"How do I look?" he asked smiling down at her, feeling warmer already.

"You look adorable," she said. The comment made him screw up his face.

"Adorable? That's a compliment you give to, like, puppies."

"Oh you're cuter than any puppy, any day," Tracy said sidling up closer to him. "Do you feel warmer?" she asked.

"I do," he responded, "I can't believe you made this. I don't think I've ever gotten a better present."

"Don't tease!"

"I'm not teasing baby, I mean it," Link said, his eyes serious. "I love it. Here, let my put the gloves on."

Tracy took one of his hands and brought it between hers, pulling her gloves off first and shoving them in her pocket. "It works better if you warm your fingers up first," she said, bringing his fingers to her lips and exhaling warm air on them. The sensation made Link tremble from something other than cold.

"Trace," he said softly, in that tone that both warned and promised his desire for her. She smiled and kissed his knuckle.

"I've got an idea," she said and quickly unbuttoned her jacket. Then she pulled him inside wrapping his arms around her. "Come in here and let me warm you up."

"Oh, this is very warm," Link said.

Tracy shivered for a moment. "Oh wow your hands really are cold."

"Sorry," he said swaying slightly as he held her close. "You know what else?"

"What?"

"I think my lips are still blue. Was there anything in that package to help with that?"

"Oh please," Tracy said giggling. "Just come down here and kiss me, Mr. Smooth," she leaned up on her tip toes and he ducked down, pulling her in tighter as he pressed his lips against hers.

"Warmer now?" Tracy asked breathlessly as they parted.

"Mhm," he replied, staying close as his eyes flickered over her face.

"Shall we continue on our way then?"

It took Link a moment to remember what they had been doing before, it was a dangerous side affect of kissing Tracy; he had to work hard to keep his wits about him. He smiled and pulled away, closing the front of her jacket so she wouldn't get cold. She smacked his hands away and started buttoning her own buttons. Link pulled on the gloves, admiring them before taking her hand and starting down the park path once more.

They continued to the skate rink, stopping to don skates. Link knelt down and double checked her laces even though she assured him they were fine. She laughed as he swept her a graceful bow and offered her his hand. She took it and together they skated around the rink. They

twirled and turned and moved together gracefully as they showed off their ice dancing moves, then they simply skated hand in hand as they talked about whatever came to mind.

As the time grew late they left the rink and headed back toward his car, both wanting some time alone together before she had to be home. Link was lost in thought, his mind on the gift he had gotten her. Somehow, even now it didn't seem like it was enough. It wasn't worthy of her even though it was everything he had been taught a gift should be. It was expensive and beautifulâ€¦ but it was just a bracelet, Tracy wasâ€¦ well Tracy.

He was pulled from his thoughts by Tracy's soft gasp. Looking up at her quickly he realized right away what had caused the surprised sound. Park workers had finished the park's nativity display and the trees around them had suddenly filled with thousands of sparkling lights. She was looking up at them in total wonder. Link wanted nothing more than to pull her close and kiss her; and since he was her boyfriend, and there was no one around to say he couldn't, he acted on the urge. He wrapped his arms around her and dipped her down, pressing his lips to hers.

They kissed for several minutes, not caring about the cold or the workers nearby. Then Link pulled her toward the car, grabbing one last kiss before tucking her under his arm and pulling her close as they walked. Tracy sighed and hugged him, pressing her cheek into his jacket.

"This is the best Christmas," she said softly.

"Yeah?" he asked quietly. "What makes it the best Christmas, Babe?" He leaned back against his car and pulled her to him.

"You," she said grinning up at him sweetly. "You make it the best. You, Link Larkin, make everything better." Then she leaned up and kissed him. Link had nothing to say to that â€" she'd stunned him â€" so he just kissed her back.

Tracy reached around him and pulled the handle for the door. Shuffling Link out of the way, she pulled the suicide door open and slipped into the back seat.

Link leaned over and peered in at her, raising one dark brow inquisitively. "Trace, what are you doing?"

"I don't want to go home yet," she said, her voice sweetly innocent.

Link looked around, seeing the lights of the skating rink off in the distance and no other cars anywhere nearby. Feeling they were relatively secluded, he climbed inside after her, shutting the doors and scooting across the seat until she was in his arms. He grinned as he kissed her. In moments gloves and coats were discarded, the young couple wanting to feel each other as they pressed together. Tracy pushed Link's hat off his head revealing the damage it had done to his hair. He just laughed and she shoved her fingers through it and pulled him to her.

"You know Darlin', " Link said, kissing over her jaw, his hand gripping her waist. "You better be a good girl, or Santa isn't going

to bring you anything."

Tracy laughed, but stopped abruptly as he started tenderly kissing her eyebrow. She could feel his fingers massaging her waist; in fact, she could distinctly feel every part of him that was touching her. His lips lightly brushed her temple; the tip of his nose traced a whispering line over her cheekâ€!

"Santa's a busy guy, Linkâ€|" she said, her hand running down his arm and taking hold of the hand at her waist. "Maybe we should be naughty and save him a tripâ€|" she brought his hand up and carefully placed it against the side of her breast. Link stopped kissing her and pulled back, looking down at his hand on her, and swallowed.

"Trace," he said uncertainly.

"Unlessâ€| you don't want toâ€|"

"God, Traceâ€|" he didn't finish but chewed his lip as he lifted her breast in his palm and squeezed gently. She sighed softly and he forced himself to look at her seriously. "Are you sure?" She nodded and he watched as she slowly undid three buttons on her blouse, revealing the pale skin of her chest until just the top of her bra was visible, tiny lace rosettes resting against creamy flesh.

Link exhaled sharply, stunned frozen for a moment at the offering presented him; then he leaned in quickly and kissed her mouth, his tongue slipping inside to stroke hers as he deftly caressed her breast. Tracy gripped his shoulders, holding on tightly as the feel of him touching her rocketed through her body.

Link kissed her chin, and then brushed his lips softly over her neck, kissing her collar bone and following the line of it over to her shoulder then back again. Meticulously his lips explored the exposed flesh, kissing every inch; and his hands petted her with gentle enthusiasm. Tracy's fingers were in his hair, the others digging into his back just above the waistband of his slacks. She whimpered softly as the tip of his tongue slipped just beneath the edge of her bra, and Link pulled away slowly, taking a deep breath as he brushed the tip of her nose with his.

"I have to stop," he whispered, kissing her softly. Tracy nodded in agreement, not trusting her voice at that moment and then watched in awe as Link carefully did up her three buttons and helped her back up to a sitting position. She looked at him wide eyed and then took his face in her hands and kissed him again, Link grabbed her and pulled her to him, kissing her back hard and losing himself in her until he started to lean her back against the seat again. He managed to stop himself.

"Tracy, baby," he laughed a little as he pulled away.

"I'm sorry," she said softly, "I'm sorry."

He shook his head. "Don't be sorry."

Link slipped out the door and then helped her out. He opened the front passenger door for her, fighting the urge to grab her the entire time. Taking a deep breath he walked around to his side of the

car, ordering his body under control. When he climbed in behind the wheel, Tracy was hanging over the back of the seat retrieving their coats, and he was presented with sweet round behind wiggling at him. He turned away and gripped the steering wheel, closing his eyes to focus on cooling his raging hormones.

Beside him, Tracy plopped back in the seat with a bundle of coats in her arms. She looked over at Link and giggled.

"What?" he asked, surprised as he turned to look at her.

Tracy covered her giggle with her hand, her eyes sparkling with laughter. "Your hair! It's umâ€!"

Link's eyes got big, his hands flying to his head. He started to look in the mirror and then stopped himself. "No, no I'm not even going to lookâ€!" He looked back at her stubbornly and then spotted his new hat in her lap. He reached out and snatched it up, slipping it on and pulling it down to his ears. He grinned at her and she laughed again. "See how you take care of me?" he said leaning over to give her a quick kiss. "What would I do without you?"

"Umâ€! you'd have no one to mess your hair up in the first place?"

"Well," he said starting the car with a smirk. "What fun would that be?" To which Tracy giggled some more as she started pulling on her jacket. Link smiled broadly at the sound as he drove her home.

That night, as Link lay in bed mentally recounting the time he spent with Tracy, he realized that he hadn't given Tracy her gift. He frowned slightly. She hadn't even asked for it. They had laughed and teased the whole way to her house, stayed in the car a little longer than needed and then lingered by her front door, but presents hadn't come up.

Tomorrow was Christmas Eve and she was leaving for the holidays, going to visit her father's family in Philadelphia. He wouldn't be seeing her until a few days afterwards. He was pretty sure her parent's wouldn't be fond of him showing up this late, so there was no way he would be able to give it to her. He groaned, pressing his hands to his face in regret. She deserved so much more than that!

He thought again of the things she had made for him. They weren't fancy, or expensive, but he loved the color, and she had to have spent so much time, thinking and planning for him. It was a bit humbling to think about really.

He wanted to give her something that would make her feel that way; that would let her know she meant more to him than anythingâ€!

Tracy sat quietly and looked out the window at the still streets. Nearly everyone was holed up in their homes together for Christmas. The Turnblad's had engaged in a wonderful morning of opening gifts together and were now simply waiting for the Roast Beef to finish. She had helped with the clean up, helped with the little kids and conversed with all the cousins, now she just wanted a little quiet time to herself. She sighed and let her chin rest in her palm as her dark eyes perused the gray skies. She knew it was pathetic, but she missed Link.

"Why so mopey, Tracy Cakes?" Wilbur asked coming up behind her and placing a hand on her shoulder. Tracy couldn't help but smile.

"I'm not moping daddy, I was justâ€| thinking."

"About a certain boy I wager," Wilbur said with a rascally smirk. "Didn't you just see him a day ago?"

"Daddyâ€|" Tracy said, blushing slightly as she turned away.

"Believe it or not I still remember the days when I would pine for your motherâ€|" Wilbur started and Edna walked by, giggling at him. Tracy rolled her eyes.

"Eww, Daddy," she said, but smiled secretly when he followed after her mother with that look in his eye. She thought they were bad before, but now they were unstoppable.

"So, Tracy," her younger cousin, Lucy, asked coming to sit at her feet. "What did your boyfriend give you for Christmas?"

Tracy smiled for a moment, remembering their holiday date for a moment, and then she opened her mouth to answer and stopped. "Umâ€|" she frowned a little and looked out the window again. Link hadn't given her a present. She was sure she remembered him mentioning one butâ€| "Link is the best present ever all by himself," she said simply, not sure what else to offer. Lucy sighed, her youthful and romantic imaginations stirred, and scampered off to play with her newest doll, leaving Tracy to ponder the situation. It wasn't that she was disappointed, after all she hadn't even noticed until just now, but it did seem a bit odd that he hadn't given her anythingâ€| didn't it?

She was worrying quietly over this as she helped to set the table for Christmas dinner, setting each knife and fork precisely when her Uncle Al called her from the front room, his booming voice carrying to every corner of the small house.

"Tracy, there's someone at the door for you!"

She looked up, surprised and a little confused, and then set her handful of utensils down at the end of the table as she moved toward the door. Every ounce of breath left her body and her heart leapt in her chest when she saw Link standing there, looking anxious in that way that only she could see.

"Link!" she cried, hurtling down the steps and into his arms, forgetting for a moment about the dozens of family watching from the windows and kissing him.

"Hey, Darlin', " he said, kissing her back and then looking apprehensively at the large guy looking at him from the doorway.

"What are you doing here?" she demanded, still completely stunned by his appearance. She pressed her hands against his chest, smoothing them over his jacket as if not certain he was real.

"I forgot to give you your Christmas present," he said softly.

"But how?"

"I can be very resourceful when I have to be," Link said, smiling at her; and she grinned even as she shivered in the cold.

"I seem to recall some resourcefulness," she said happily.

Link started to take off his jacket so he could wrap it around her but was stopped by Wilbur's voice. "You keep that on son, it's cold out here," he said as he hung Tracy's own coat from her shoulders. He looked at Link meaningfully for a long moment. "Don't take too long out here, there's a nice hot dinner inside waiting."

Link nodded, receiving the warning along with the understanding the man was giving him. He took a deep breath and looked at Tracy. She was smiling and her cheeks were pink with cold. He loved her and sometimes it stunned him, the intensity of what he felt for her.

"Okay I hadn't really realized we'd have an audienceâ€|" Link said, moving back toward his car on the curb and pulling his guitar from the back seat. Tracy followed him with her eyes, surprised by the appearance of the instrument. He didn't often play out loud for anyone. In fact it had taken him months to even admit he played the guitar, let alone play for her. "I guess that this will have to do." Tracy brought a hand to cover her mouth, blinking as he strummed a starting chord across the strings.

And then, in the middle of the sidewalk with her relatives looking on, he sang her a song. Sweet and witty lyrics, accompanied by his warm voice and his charming smile left Tracy completely stunned. When he finished she just stood there looking at him, her dark eyes wide.

"Uh, Trace, if you could maybe say something right about now I'd feel a whole lot betterâ€|" Link said quietly, not wanting anyone but her to hear. Then she was wrapped around him, the guitar thrumming discordantly between them. Link somehow managed to shift it to his back before her lips pressed against his.

"That was the most beautiful thing I have ever been given," she said, kissing him repeatedly, small pecks on his mouth and chin. He laughed and kissed her back a moment before looking up at the windows where cousins and aunts were peering out at them.

"You're going to get me in trouble, Baby," he whispered against her ear.

"Bah on them," she whispered back.

Out of nowhere a soft flake drifted down and landed on her nose, followed by dozens more tumbling out of the sky, fat and white. Tracy gasped and turned her face up to the sky, closing her eyes in rapture, and Link just watched her because he couldn't think of anything more beautiful.

She opened her eyes and caught him watching her, her eyes turning mischievous. "Did you do this?"

Link grinned. "Just for you, Doll," he said, and she tossed back her head and laughed.

"Hey you two, come inside now before you freeze up solid!" Edna called from the window. "Link, you come on in too. You can't be driving home in this."

"I'd love to, Mrs. Turnblad," he called before turning back to Tracy, still held tightly in his arms. "And I love you," he said, pushing a strand of her blonde streaked hair from her face.

"I love you too," she whispered and leaned up to kiss him one more time before linking her arm in his and leading him toward the door. "I hope you're ready for this!" she said as they wandered up the steps.

"Oh, I think I can take it!"

"Hmm, we'll see!"

Link laughed as he was swallowed up by the extended Turnblad clan.

The bracelet, he thought, could wait for another day.

End  
file.